

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BANGKO 02572 131108Z

15

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 OMB-01 CU-02 /068 W

----- 011440

O 131004Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 762

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RANGOON UNN

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

AMCONSUL UDORN

DIA WASHDC

CINCPAC HONOLULU

USSAG NAKHON PHANOM

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 2572

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, TH

SUBJECT: THE ASSEMBLY CHOOSES A PRIME MINISTER

REF: (A) BANGKOK 2507, B) BANGKOK 1851 (NOTAL)

BEGIN SUMMARY: SENI PRAMOT WON THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY VOTE TO FORM THE NEXT GOVERNMENT. THE DEMOCRATS, SOCIAL AGRARIANS, AND POSSIBLY EVEN THAI NATION SHOULD GET MOST OF THE MINISTERIAL PORTFOLIOS. A GOVERNMENT MAY EMERGE BY THE WEEKEND OR EARLY NEXT WEEK. UNDER A DEMOCRAT-DOMINATED COALITION, WE SEE CONTINUED AND PERHAPS INCREASING PRESSURES AGAINST THE U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE, BUT WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT SENI WOULD PRESS FOR IRRATIONAL TROOP WITHDRAWALS. END  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BANGKO 02572 131108Z

SUMMARY.

1. THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FEBRUARY 13 HELD A CLOSED SESSION WITH OPEN VOTE TO SELECT A PRIME MINISTER. THERE WERE THREE NOMINEES. KHUKRIT PRAMOT WITHDREW HIS NAME THEREBY NARROWING THE FIELD TO TWO. THE FINAL TALLY WAS 133 FOR SENI PRAMOT (DEMOCRAT), 52 FOR CHATCHAI CHUNHAWAN (THAI NATION), 38 ABSTENTIONS, AND 46 ABSENTEES. SENI IS THUS THE CLEAR CHOICE TO FORM THE NEW GOVERNMENT.

2. SHORTLY AFTER THE SESSION BROKE UP, AN ASSEMBLYMAN TOLD AN EMBASSY POLITICAL ASSISTANT THAT THE REASON FOR THE LARGE NUMBER OF ABSENTEES WAS THAT MANY MEMBERS OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTIES REALIZED THAT SENI WOULD WIN, AND SAW NO POINT IN ATTENDING THE SESSION. HE EXPLAINED THE ABSTENTIONS AS FOLLOWS: THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF THAILAND (15 SEATS) WISHED TO RETAIN ITS INDEPENDENCE, AND MOST OF THE REST WERE MEMBERS OF SPLINTER PARTIES OPEN TO PURCHASE BY WHICHEVER SIDE WAS VICTORIOUS. (COMMENT: THE SECOND OBSERVATION MAY BE OVERLY CYNICAL, BUT SHOULD NOT BE CAVALIERLY REJECTED.)

3. THE ASSEMBLYMAN FURTHER SAID THAT THAI NATION LEADERS WOULD BE MEETING THE AFTERNOON OF FEBRUARY 13 TO CUT UP THE MINISTERIAL PIE WITH THE DEMOCRATS AND SOCIAL AGRARIANS. THAI NATION MAY THUS BE BACK IN THE GOVERNMENT FOLD, THOUGH WE HAVE NO OTHER SOURCE TO CONFIRM THIS POSSIBILITY. HE EXPECTED A NEW GOVERNMENT TO EMERGE BY THE END OF THIS WEEK OR EARLY NEXT.

4. AN INTERESTING SIDESHOW AND POSSIBLE INFLUENCE ON THE VOTE WAS THE ARRIVAL OF SOME 300 TO 400 MILITANT STUDENTS UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF ACTIVIST POLICE MAJOR ANAN SENAKHAN. THEY BORE PLACARDS DEMANDING THE OUSTER OF ASSEMBLY SPEAKER PRASIT KANCHANAWAT WHOSE ELECTION BY SECRET BALLOT FEBRUARY 6 HAD THE WHIFF OF CONSIDERABLE VOTE BUYING (BANGKOK 2507). DURING THE BALLOTING FOR PRIME MINISTER, LOCAL AUTHORITIES LOCKED THE STUDENTS UP IN THE ASSEMBLY BUILDING, BUT NOT IN THE MEETING HALL, ALONG WITH 100 OR SO HANGERS-ON, INCLUDING OUR POLITICAL ASSISTANT. AS OF 1300 FEBRUARY 13, SOME 250  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BANGKO 02572 131108Z

STUDENTS WERE STILL AT PARLIAMENT DEMANDING TO SEE SOME OF THE FEW ASSEMBLYMEN WHO HAD NOT GONE HOME. ALTHOUGH ANAN HAD LEFT, THE STUDENTS HAD NOT GIVEN UP ON PRASIT.

5. COMMENT: PUBLIC AND PRESS INDIGNATION OVER LAST WEEK'S SKULLDUGGERY IN THE ASSEMBLY, AND THE PREDICTABILITY OF GREATER PUBLIC DISTURBANCES SHOULD THE OLD STYLE POLITICS OPENLY CONTINUE, BOTH LED TO TODAY'S DEMOCRAT VICTORY.

KHUKRIT PRAMOT SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN THE PIVOTAL FIGURE. HIS ELEVENTH HOUR DECISION FOR SENI (REFTEL A) MUST HAVE CONVINCED THE CONSERVATIVES THAT THEY COULD NOT MUSTER A WORKABLE MAJORITY. AT THIS EARLY STAGE, WE SEE NO NEED TO REVISE OUR ANALYSIS OF THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE UNITED STATES OF A DEMOCRAT-DOMINATED COALITION GOVERNMENT (REFTEL B). WE CAN WORK WELL WITH SENI. WE SEE CONTINUED AND PERHAPS INCREASING PRESSURES AGAINST THE US MILITARY PRESENCE, BUT WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT SENI WOULD PRESS FOR IRRATIONAL TROOP WITHDRAWALS.  
KINTNER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** COALITION GOVERNMENT, PRIME MINISTER, ELECTION RESULTS, POLITICAL PARTIES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 13 FEB 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975BANGKO02572  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D750052-0570  
**From:** BANGKOK  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1975/newtext/t19750248/aaaabqkz.tel  
**Line Count:** 126  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 75 BANGKOK 2507, 75 BANGKOK 1851  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 16 MAY 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <16 MAY 2003 by ifshinsr>; APPROVED <19 MAY 2003 by GolinoFR>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
05 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** THE ASSEMBLY CHOOSES A PRIME MINISTER  
**TAGS:** PGOV, PINT, TH, (SENI PRAMOT)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006